

**SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF DIRECTORS – ACTION SUMMARY
Friday, March 18, 2005 – 11:00 a.m.**

**Administration Building
2101 Hurley Way, Sacramento, CA**

CALL TO ORDER

The special meeting was called to order by President Granados. Board Members present: Engellenner, Granados, Lawson, Trujillo, Valley. Directors Duveneck, Goold, Jones, Kelly, absent. Staff: Fire Chief Martinez, Board Clerk Tilson.

PLEDGE TO FLAG

**PUBLIC OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST WITHIN
DISTRICT JURISDICTION ON ITEM SCHEDULED ON THE AGENDA**

NOTIFICATION OF BOARD MEMBERS ON SENSITIVE ISSUES—(Granados)

- There was an embarrassing occurrence and everyone was taken off guard. Some Board members contacted the Board President immediately inquiring about the incident and questioning why they were not notified ahead of time. The incident aired on Thursday. He contacted Fire Chief Martinez regarding methodology for notification prior to news media release and a special meeting. Need to deal with sensitive issues and not impact lives of people but still have full disclosure to the public when it is appropriate.
- Fire Chief Martinez stated they discussed acceptable practice for notification of Board members on sensitive issues that may become public. In the past, the Board was not advised on disciplinary actions as a general practice to be sensitive to the employees and confidentiality. Currently there is no official policy and in order to fulfill the desires of the Board, a policy is needed.

A chronology of events was presented leading to the news release on Channel 3 at 5:00 p.m. and subsequently every news station, and the Sacramento Bee on Friday. Assistant Chief Hartley was responsible for public information and received a call Thursday afternoon, March 10; contacted Fire Chief Martinez and was briefed on appropriate information. The reporter met with him Thursday afternoon around 2:30 p.m. relevant to the broadcast at 5:00 p.m. This type of information is provided only in response to an inquiry.

Fire Chief Martinez stated his preference would be to provide whatever information is desired in writing to the entire Board.

- Director Valley requested to be notified of any sensitive information prior to any release to the public media, through a written memo sent to Board Clerk Tilson to fax and make the Board aware. If more information is desired, Board members could then call the appropriate officer. He felt the department did a good job in taking care of the problem but we are extremely sensitive to the criticism of our firefighters who are doing a good job.
- Director Lawson concurred with Director Valley and stated he is involved with community action committees and different forums. The other day he attended a meeting in Fair Oaks and fortunately the issue did not come up. It would have been difficult to offset this situation without any knowledge to answer questions. Basically would like information in a timely manner by fax on decisions like this to provide an opportunity to defend and support Metro in general.

In response to Director Lawson, Fire Chief Martinez stated all parties involved in a disciplinary process are notified to include any union representation.

- Director Trujillo echoed the same concerns and would like to have prior knowledge to enable a response to the media and constituents that it is under investigation and appropriate action is being taken.
- President Granados shared the same concern regarding inquiries but no answers. Agreed there is a need to set a policy.
- Director Engellenner stated he didn't see the news release on Channel 3 but neighbors came over and inquired about a sex scandal at Metro Fire. He told them they have the wrong fire department, but read it in the Sacramento Bee the next morning. Requested a heads up next time.
- Fire Chief Martinez stated staff will draft a written policy for presentation to the Policy Committee and the full Board, encompassing Board needs and input from all directors, with establishment of an interim procedure to follow.

The District is also working on a vehicle to disseminate information relative to District media releases on significant incidents and secondary issues like recruitment. This is a separate issue but the District is sensitive to doing both.

ADJOURNMENT – Meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Gregory A. Granados, President

Matt Kelly, Secretary

Charlotte Tilson, Clerk of the Board